

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

For HCRS use only

received

date entered

1. Name

historic Craig Healing Springs (Preferred)

and/or common Craig Springs Conference Grounds

2. Location

street & number Route 658

N/A not for publication

city, town Craig Springs

N/A vicinity of

congressional district 9th (William C. Wampler)

state Virginia

code 51

county Craig

code 045

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Virginia, c/o Rev. Lewis McPherran,
Regional Minister

street & number 7700 Woodman Road

city, town Richmond

N/A vicinity of

state Virginia 23228

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Craig County Courthouse

street & number

N/A

city, town New Castle

state Virginia

6. Representation in Existing Surveys (2) (See Continuation Sheet #1)

(1) Historic American Buildings
title Survey Inventory

has this property been determined eligible? ☐ yes ☒ no

date 1969

☒ federal ☐ state ☐ county ☐ local

depository for survey records Library of Congress

city, town Washington

state D. C.

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	N/A
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Craig Healing Springs resort prospered during the first fifty years of this century, although it never achieved the notoriety of the larger Virginia springs such as the White Sulphur or the Hot. While a hotel (now demolished) was built at the springs ca. 1885, the property was not commercially developed on a large scale until 1909. Simple frame construction and a homogenous architectural style give Craig Healing Springs more the appearance of a summer camp than of the successful resort that it was once. The present complex of twenty-three buildings continues to enjoy a remote, lush location in the Allegheny Mountains of Craig County.

Most of the buildings comprising Craig Healing Springs are cottages; the remainder are service buildings. With the exception of the two-story, brick Oak Lodge, all structures at Craig Healing Springs are frame, modest in size, and simple in design. The core of the complex is a large structure called Central, which contained guest registration, rooms, and the kitchen and dining facilities. Local tradition relates that the original portion of Central was once used as a private school building before the resort was developed. The structure was expanded ca. 1935 and is still used for lodging, cooking, and dining by the present owners. The Oak Lodge, across the road from Central, was built ca. 1935 on the site of a frame bath house. The lodge contains guest rooms and the facilities for the healing baths. The bathing fixtures have been removed, but the guest rooms are still utilized. The dance pavilion is north of the Oak Lodge and is used as an assembly hall. A hipped roof covers the open room that is encased on all sides by windows. The gazebo that marks the location of the springs stands northwest of the dance pavilion. The swimming pool and part of the complex of guest cottages are north and west of the gazebo. Other cottages are positioned north and east of Central. A few of the cottages were moved from a small, extinct resort named Monte Vista which operated for a short period ca. 1900-1920 near the site of the present golf clubhouse, three-tenths of a mile northeast of the complex. Long gable roofs cover the cottages which generally contain four or five rooms. Original furnishings remain in the majority of the rooms, which were austere in design and sparsely appointed.

A number of frame service buildings stand along Route 658 in front of the main drive. The row of three attached commercial buildings is of the most interest. With their millwork cornices, they are the most decorative of the buildings which comprise the Springs. The west bay of the east building is of special interest, as it contains an original two-lane bowling alley. It remains complete with its original balls and pins. Manually operated, it requires a player to sit at the far end to restack the pins and return the balls down the hand-carved trough. The remaining space is used for storage and to house the boiler. The one-story post office with bars on its windows and the two-story laundry (now used as a garage) also remain.

During the 1930s golf was becoming a popular sport and ca. 1935 a nine-hole golf course was opened at Craig Healing Springs east of the main resort area. Because of the maintenance required and its little use in the past twenty years, the course has not been preserved. The board-and-batten clubhouse remains. (The golf course and clubhouse lie outside the nomination boundaries.)

In 1960 the property was acquired by the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Virginia who have developed the former resort as a conference and retreat center. With its carefully maintained original grounds and buildings, Craig Healing Springs is significant as an excellent example of the adaptive reuse of a historic property.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify) Popular culture

Specific dates Ca. 1885, 1909-1920, **Builder/Architect** Unknown
ca. 1935

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Craig Healing Springs is significant as a collection of twenty-three well-preserved, early 20th-century resort buildings representative of the architecture of Virginia's more modest spas. The Craig Healing Springs Company, incorporated in 1909, developed the property as a resort where one could treat a variety of maladies by drinking the mineral spring waters and by taking the curing baths. The health spa-resort complex flourished with the advent of automobile travel in the years between the two world wars but declined in popularity with changes in travel and vacation patterns in the 1950s. Now serving as a conference and retreat center for the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Virginia, who purchased it in 1960, Craig Healing Springs is a notable effort in the adaptive reuse of historic buildings.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The presence of "yellow spring waters" on this property was noted as early as 1796 in a deed from Governor James Monroe to William and Joseph Eakins. The remote and almost inaccessible location of the springs during the 19th century, however, prevented its development as a health resort after the manner of more famous Virginia spas such as the Hot Springs and the White Sulphur Springs. The first suggestion that plans for resort development were contemplated for the area is found in a deed dated 1880 in which reference is made to "this valuable property," an indication of the potential commercial significance of the site. Five years later the Yellow Springs tract was purchased by eleven men who probably were responsible for the ca. 1885 construction of the now-demolished Craig Hotel, the first hotel structure at the springs. One of the eleven partners, Martin Hoffman, bought out the other ten and called the property "All Healing Springs," a name that spoke to the popular late 19th-century belief in the healing properties of various mineral waters.

The promise of profitable iron mining and the extension of rail lines to nearby New Castle brought people and commercial investment to the vicinity of the springs by the last decade of the 19th century. With the completion of a spur line of the Chesapeake and Ohio railroad (begun in 1897), passengers could travel by rail to within twelve miles of the resort. The example of railroad magnate Melville Ingalls, who invested one million dollars in the Homestead Hotel at Hot Springs in 1890, no doubt also encouraged investors to consider development of the southwestern Virginia resort. A 1907 booklet extolling the advantages of Craig County specifically mentioned the area's mineral springs and pleasure and health resorts and thus gave Craig Healing Springs its first important publicity.

Following several changes of ownership involving men who were active in acquiring mining rights in the county, the Craig Healing Springs Company purchased the property in 1909 and initiated an era of expansion. The land it bought included the old Craig Hotel and two school buildings, one of which now serves as part of the conference center dining room. A new, three-story hotel, built in 1912, formed the nucleus of the complex. Under the management of N. S. Buck, a row of cottages was added to the resort before World War I, while G. W. Layman, owner of the mineral springs portion of the property, remodeled one of

9. Major Bibliographical References

Craig County Board of Trade. Craig County, Virginia. New Castle, Va. 1907.
Fishwick, Marshall W. Springlore in Virginia. Bowling Green, Ohio: Bowling Green State University, 1978.
Foster, Bill. "Craig Springs Scrapbook." Collection of articles in Virginia Christians, 1971
Richmond, Va. Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Archives. Craig County File No. 22-4,
Craig Healing Springs.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 14 acres

Quadrangle name Craig Springs, Va.

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

A

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5	6	2	5	4	0
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4	1	4	8	8	3	0
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Zone Easting Northing

B

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Zone Easting Northing

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D

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4	1	4	8	5	4	0
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E

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5	6	2	4	2	0
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4	1	4	8	7	8	0
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Verbal boundary description and justification Beginning at a point on N side of Kale Branch of Grannys Creek about 75' S of Route 658 and about 1500' W of the intersection of routes 635 and 658; thence extending NW across Route 658, all for about 400'; thence extending about 130' NNE to N side of road to retreat house; thence extending about 250' NW along said side; thence extending about 350' NE to W side of road between Richmond and West Virginia cottages; thence extending about 200' SE along said side; thence extending about 130' NE to W side of road E of West Virginia Cottage; thence extending about 200' SE to S side of road to Route 658; thence continuing about 400' SE along said side to N side of 658; thence extending about 50' SW along said side; thence extending about 250' SE to N side of Kale Branch; thence continuing about 900' W along said side to point of origin.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Staff

organization Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission

date December 1980

street & number 221 Governor Street

telephone (804) 786-3144

city or town Richmond

state Virginia 23219

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

☐ national ☒ state ☐ local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

H. Bryan Mitchell

title H. Bryan Mitchell, Executive Director
Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission

date DEC 16 1980

For HCRS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

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received
date entered

Craig Healing Springs, Craig County, Virginia

Continuation sheet #1

Item number 6,7,8

Page 1, 1, 1

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

- (2) Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Survey
1968, 1980 State
Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission
221 Governor Street
Richmond, Virginia 23219

7. DESCRIPTION - Boundary Justification

The total acreage for the Craig Healing Springs nomination is approximately fourteen acres, which is only part of the total acreage owned by the Christian Church. This nominated area includes approximately twenty-five structures together forming the nucleus of the resort.

8. SIGNIFICANCE

the early school buildings and probably built some of the stone buildings and the bowling alley. By 1920 Craig Healing Springs had largely assumed its present form.

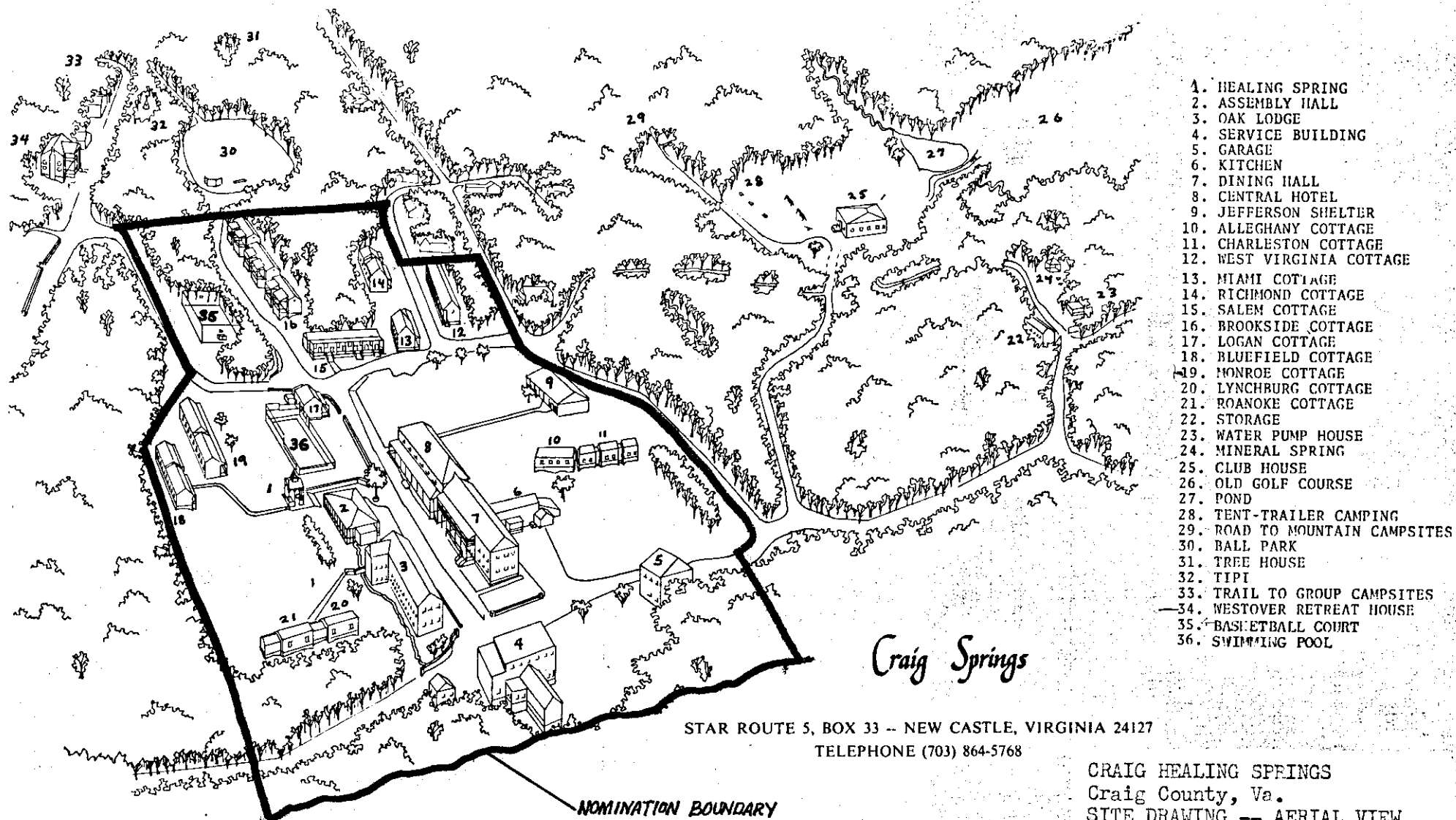
The advent of automobile travel in the 1920s brought new visitors to the Springs. Florida residents, looking for a cool summer vacation area, bought many lots for cottages. The prosperity of the resort in this post-war decade engendered among its owners dreams of future development. An architect's drawing, prepared by Stanhope S. Johnson of Lynchburg in 1923, projected a one-hundred room, four-story hotel for the complex, the erection of twin hotels facing either side of the main street, the construction of a dam and recreational lake, and the enclosure of the mineral springs in the form of a Greek temple. The Stock Market Crash of 1929 prevented the realization of these grandiose plans; nevertheless, many improvements were made to the resort in the mid-1930's. Cottages from Monte Vista, a small resort which operated ca. 1900-1920 northeast of Craig Springs, including Bluefield Cottage, were moved to the site of the springs, and a nine-hole golf course was built. In addition, a large brick structure known as Oak Lodge was erected on the site of the old wooden bath houses, and the Central Hotel was enlarged and improved.

With the growing popularity of traveling vacations in the late 1940s and 1950s, Craig Healing Springs increasingly failed to attract either vacationers or those seeking to repair their health.

In 1960 the property was acquired by the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Virginia, who have developed the former resort as the Craig Springs Conference Grounds of the Virginia Convention of Christian Churches. The church has carefully maintained the original grounds and buildings, as well as many of the original furnishings.

MTP/RAC

CONFERENCE AND RETREAT CENTER



CRAIG HEALING SPRINGS
Craig County, Va.
SITE DRAWING -- AERIAL VIEW
from 1970s Christian Church
brochure (not to scale)
MAP 2 of 3

CHRISTIAN CHURCH (DISCIPLES OF CHRIST) IN VIRGINIA

2200 MONUMENT AVENUE - RICHMOND, VIRGINIA 23220 - TELEPHONE (804) 353-5561

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